

# **Smart Young Pros Justify Operation of PGA School**

**By HERB GRAFFIS**

**P**ROFESSIONALS who looked over the 116 young men at the PGA's second annual Assistants' Training School and sat in on any of the class sessions enthusiastically declared the school is the best thing that the PGA has done for golf in general, the master pros and the association itself.

Quite a number of the pros, from 84-year-old Bertie Way to fellows who've been on pro jobs only a few years, got a close-up of the students and classes held in the Lions' Club building at Dunedin, Fla., Jan. 13-17 inclusive. Some of them had been dubious of the procedure of the Assistants' Training School although none had questioned that a business education for assistants was needed in order that clubs would be better served by pro staffs and professionals could make a profit from employment of a select group of well trained and well paid assistants.

## **Training Long Needed**

It has been recognized for years that a planned program of assistant training was greatly needed in professional golf. Supts. had gone into training programs, collaborating with state agricultural colleges and experiment stations and the USGA Green Section. Club Mgrs had a program for developing younger men through courses at hotel schools and in several college short courses. But the pros, until 1957, had been without training schooling for assistants although this obvious service had been pointed out frequently for more than 25 years by GOLFDOM.

The GOLFDOM campaign echoed the urging of Willie Ogg and a few other of his pro pioneer companions who'd been sold by Ogg on the idea. Ogg's presence on the faculty of the first two schools was a happy indication of the open, alert and adaptable minds of progressive older pros.

Emil Beck, pro at the Black River CC, Port Huron, Mich., has been chairman of the Assistants' Training School program

since it was launched. Leo O'Grady, former pro at PGA National Course and now operator of a golf range near the course, is co-chairman. The pattern of the assistants' course, as devised by Beck with the aid of O'Grady, according to master pros who have watched the school conducted, and by the word of the students who were at the 1957 classes, is of positive and practical value.

There were five instructors at the training school, sessions of which started at 7:30 a. m. and ran for 45 minute classes with a 15 minute coffee break after 10:35.

The instructors and their subjects were:  
Joe Devany, Grosse Ile (Mich.) G&CC — Pro Department Policy and Management;

Eddie Duino, San Jose (Calif.) CC — Public Relations and Professional Ethics;  
George Aulbach, Lufkin (Tex.) CC — Merchandising and Advertising;

Willie Ogg, Albany (N. Y.) CC — Principles of Instruction; Observation, Analysis and Application;

Bill Hardy, Chevy Chase (Md.) Club — Club Repairs, Fitting, Construction and Design Features.

## **Expects Big Returns**

Instructors spoke from manuscripts and notes that reflected the considerable time and study these men devoted to this modern development in pro business education. The instructors were paid nominal fees from the PGA educational fund allotment of National Golf Day revenue. This writer is very strongly of the opinion that the golfing public and PGA members got much bigger value per dollar from the Assistants' Training School investment than from any other expenditure of Golf Day income. His studied estimate is that the schooling should mean at least \$1,000 a year increased pro department revenue per PGA school graduate and probably more.

In evening sessions Woodrow Register, Pres., First National Bank of Dunedin spoke on financing fundamentals of pro shop operation.

Tom Crane, PGA executive sec., told of PGA organization and services, and Herb Graffis editor of GOLFDOM and GOLFING magazines, talked on the assistant's personality and performance in expressing the ideal character of pro department operation.

## **Junker Provides Cash**

William Junker, sales mgr., Fawick Flexi-Grip Co., spoke as host to the banquet, which concluded the training pro-

gram and at which diplomas were awarded. Junker also put up \$1000 of the Golf Pride grip makers' money as the purse for the PGA Senior-Junior tournament which was played in afternoons following school sessions.

A number of sons of master professionals attended the school. Among them were Tom Watrous, Charles Blanton, Wm. Flattery, Gene Kunes, jr., David Ogilvie III and Harry Schwab, jr.

Of the 116 attending the school, the expenses of 15 were paid by pros who employed them; four had expenses paid by their clubs; seven came from Canada and nine are not yet employed as assistants.

Most of the lads had finished high school and about 20 were university graduates. Twenty were attending their second year at the school. One young man borrowed on his life insurance to get to the school. Travel and living expenses cost the youngsters probably about \$150 although some managed to get rides to and from Dunedin. One lad, Joe Bonadio, summer asst. to Art Doering at the Pittsburgh Field Club, got up at 5 a.m. to drive 57 miles from his winter job to be on time for the opening of classes.

#### **Show Aptitude, Eagerness**

Every student was on time every day and evening at the classes. Appearance, attitude, aptitude and eagerness of the young men at the assistants' school plainly showed that pros, golf clubs and the PGA all are lucky to have this high class of talent coming into golf business.

At the 1957 annual meeting of the PGA, Pacific slope delegates expressed keen interest in having an assistants' school established for that area. Examination and appraisal of the school at Dunedin would warrant favorable action on the western pros' request.

Any successful pro, club official with knowledge of industrial training, and golf playing equipment manufacturer would agree after learning the facts about the PGA Assistants' Training School that this project reveals promise of a bright future for the business and the game of golf.

Emil Beck and his co-chairman, Leo O'Grady, and the assistants' school staff have made a significant and highly profitable contribution to golf in planning and conducting this educational work.

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### **Golf Club Sales Show Two Per Cent Increase**

Sales of golf clubs for the fiscal year ending Oct. 31, 1957, by companies reporting sales to the National Assn. of Golf Club Manufacturers, was 4,140,150 units. This was an increase of about two per cent over the comparable 1956 period. Of the 1957 total, 2,887,696 were irons and 1,252,454 were woods.

Commenting on the sales for last year, Henry P. Cowen, Assn. pres., said that the volume increase was remarkable in view of the poor 1957 spring weather. He added that a large part of the gain is attributed to the upturn in the number of golf participants.

Cowen also cited the expanded services and impressive performance record of the National Golf Foundation as being instrumental in increasing club sales.

### **Jackson Event Open to Pros Eliminated at Baton Rouge**

The first Jackson Open, which will be played at the Jackson (Miss.) CC, Mar. 1-2, has been scheduled expressly for players eliminated after 36 holes in a nearby major tournament. In this case it is the Baton Rouge Open, which will be played Feb. 27-Mar. 2. The Jackson event, according to Nelson Giddens, pro, will be played over 36-holes with prize money totalling \$5,000.

Every player eliminated at Baton Rouge will automatically become eligible for the Jackson Open. Jackson's Junior Chamber of Commerce is cooperating with Country Club members in underwriting the tournament.

### **PGA Adds Five Tournaments to Spring-Summer Card**

Five new tournaments, including two \$50,000 events, have been added to the PGA's spring and summer schedule. The \$50,000 affairs are the Buick Open to be held at Grand Blanc, Mich., June 19-22, and the Pepsi-Boys Clubs championship which will be played at Norwich, L. I., June 26-29.

Other major additions to the circuit are: Vancouver (B.C.) Open (\$40,000), Aug. 29-Sept 1, Denver Centennial Open, Sept. 11-14, and Lafayette (La.) Open (\$15,000), Apr. 24-27.